

Florida House of Representatives

Representative Gary Aubuchon

District 74

Committees & Councils:

Roads, Bridges and Ports Policy Committee, *Chair*
Transportation & Econ. Dev. Appropriations Committee
Health Care Services Policy Committee

Finance & Tax Council, *Vice Chair*
Rules & Calendar Council
Economic Development & Community Affairs Policy Council
Select Policy Council on Strategic and Economic Planning

August 19, 2010

Dear Members:

The work groups created by Speaker Cretul to examine various aspects of the Deepwater Horizon incident have been active over the past several weeks, and I encourage you to follow the actions of the work groups on the House website and participate in meetings and conference calls as your time allows.

One area of interest to all of us is the claims process. Beginning Monday, August 23, 2010, at 12:01 am, the Gulf Coast Claims Facility (GCCF) will take over the BP claims process. The GCCF is an independent claims facility for submission and resolution of claims of individuals and businesses for costs and damages incurred as a result of the oil discharges due to the Deepwater Horizon incident. BP has agreed to contribute funds (initially \$20 billion) to an escrow account to be used to pay claims submitted to the GCCF. The GCCF will be administered by Kenneth R. Feinberg, a neutral fund administrator responsible for all decisions relating to the administration and processing of claims by the GCCF.

Attached is a document containing frequently asked questions about the GCCF, which you will find useful in answering questions from your constituents. Also attached is the Claimant Bill of Rights developed by Mr. Feinberg for the GCCF. Following are some of the key features of the new claims process:

- Emergency advance payments will be available on a monthly basis or for up to six months of losses. Emergency advance payments to individuals will be issued within 48 hours of determining eligibility; business claims will be evaluated within 7 days of receipt. Claims for emergency advance payments must be filed on or before November 23, 2010. Claimants will not be required to sign a release or waiver for emergency advance payments.
- Eligibility will be determined based on proximity to the Gulf Coast, type of industry, and dependence on the natural resources of the Gulf. According to Mr. Feinberg, the GCCF

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will be quicker, more generous and more efficient than any other remedy under federal or state law.

- Documentation or proof of loss will be required for all claims, although Mr. Feinberg has stated there will be flexibility in documents required for the emergency advance payments. Assistance will be provided to complete the claims forms, including legal assistance through the GCCF. Information submitted will remain confidential.
- A claim may be submitted in a number of ways:
 - Through the website at www.GulfCoastClaimsFacility.com.
 - By visiting a GCCF claims site office. Initially, all of the claims offices set up by BP will remain open.
 - By calling GCCF's toll free number 1-800-916-4893; TTY: 1-866-682-1758.
 - By regular, overnight, certified or registered mail, or by fax. (See page 5 of the Frequently Asked Questions for addresses and fax number.)

I assure you we will closely monitor the new process to ensure that Floridians are treated fairly. Please do not hesitate to contact me or House staff if you need additional information or have any questions relating to the Gulf Coast Claims Facility or any other oil spill issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gary Aubuchon', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Gary Aubuchon

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